Moſes and Aaron;

THE

KING

AND THE

PRIEST.

By the Author of the Examination of *Tilenus* before the Triers, *in the time of the late Rebellion.*

PSAL. 77. the laſt.

Thou leddeſt thy people like a flock by the hand of Moſes and Aaron.

ZECH. 6. 13.

And the counſel of peace ſhall be between them both.

LONDON:
Printed by *A. Maxwell* for *R. Clavel*, at the *Peacock* near the Weſt-end of St. *Pauls*. 1675.

Moses and Aaron:

OF

KING

AND THE

PRIEST.

By the Author of the Examination of Th[illegible] [illegible] before the Triers, in the time of the late Rebellion.

[illegible]

Then lodged the people like a [illegible] band of Moses and Aaron.

[illegible]

And the counsel of peace [illegible] them both.

LONDON:
Printed by [illegible] for [illegible] the [illegible]

1 SAM. 24. 5.

And it came to pass afterward, that Davids heart smote him, because he had cut off Sauls Skirt.

THE Service of this day is designed to celebrate the glorious *Memory* of King *Charles* the *Martyr*. Yet he was arraigned as a Malefactor, and a *high Court* of Justice was erected for his *Trial*. A Court that was no ways *High*, but in *Guilt* and *Impudence*: No way capable of the Title of *Justice*, but by an *Antiphrasis*; because it was so eminently unjust, as well in it's illegal Constitution, as in their direful proceedings against their Royal Soveraign. Yet before this Court he is led, even as a *Lamb to the Slaughter*; and the *Scene* is dress'd up, with all the formalities of a legal Trial, that he might with the better Grace

be mocked out of his life, by a *Pageantry* of Juſtice.

But whether ſuch Barbarous attempts upon the Perſon of a King, by his own *Liege* People, be warrantable in the ſight of Heaven, will be beſt decided by the *vote* and *practice* of a worthy ſubject, who was *a great ſufferer*, under the Power of a *Severe* Soveraign; yet himſelf a *great Prince*, and *a Stout Souldier, and a man after Gods own heart.* Aud upon this Accompt I have made choice of this Text, for the ſubject of my Diſcourſe at this time. *And it came to paſs afterward, that Davids heart ſmote him, becauſe he had cut off Sauls Skirt.*

Which words do intimate, 1. *Temptation*, and, 2. declare the *Iſſue* of it. The *Temptation was*, To deſtroy *Saul*, his Royal Soveraign: 2. The *Iſſue* of it was, an Act of *Policy*, with his *Remorſe* and *Repentnce* for it.

The firſt words of the Text do refer us to the *Temptation*: *And it came to paſs afterward.* The latter do report the Iſſue: *Davids heart ſmote him, becauſe he had cut off Sauls Skirt.*

In the firſt, we ſhall conſider the ſtrength of

of the Temptation; how it was fortified, with what force of argument it was armed, and with what vigour of Importunity it was managed, to assault him.

In the second we shall observe two things.

1. What *David* did, *He cut off the Skirt of Sauls Military Robe.*

2. What he suffered, *His heart smote him for it.*

1. The *Temptation* came upon him (as the wise-man observes Poverty to come upon the slothful,) *like an armed man*; and did most impetuously assault him upon many accompts. For there was a mighty *Provocation*, and a seeming *necessity*; and advantagious *Providence* and a fair *opportunity*, a cleer *Title* to the Crown and a pretended *Oracle*; to make way and lay claim to it. These were very plausible arguments, and there wanted not a Combination of Agitators, or a pathetical *Importunity* to inforce them.

1. The *Temptation* was armed with a specious kind of necessity, which hath no Law to govern it. The implacable malice of *Saul*, and his frequent *Machinations* to destroy *David*, without any cause or colour of offence, were a mighty pro-

O præpretium est etiam ipsorum militum audire Consultationem, to quod exhortationis versuta malitia, illustrat justi mentem solidam et inconcussam. Chrysost. Hom. de David et Saule Eraj interprite.

provocation. His malice being wilful and of this complexion, no duty of *Davids* could possibly either oblige or satisfie. *Saul* was haunted with an evil Spirit. And when the fit was upon him, none could be found so able to apply an effectual remedy as *David*: he is earnestly invited to attend, the charmes of his hand and harp do becalm the distemper, that did afflict him; yet so ignoble, so mean, so vile was his malice, he paies his Physician and musick with a *Javelin*. The King of beasts is not half so fierce and raging: The Lion may be made gentle, and kindness will oblige him; where he meets with a due submission, he will exercise a Princely Clemency: But such was the perverse humour of this King of *Israel*, no duty in *David*, no worthy performance could mitigate his displeasure: *Davids* prudence did increase his jealousy; his merits did inflame his envy, and his best Services did the more inrage his malice. When *David* conducted his forces by his own order, his best success became not only a matter of suspicion, but a crime, as if it had bin an attempt of Treason to defeat his enemies. But the most unreason-

v. Chap 18. & 19.

able

able of *Saul's* fears and jealousies were those, which arose upon the account of Gods presence and blessing in his enterprizes; he was afraid of *David, because the Lord was with him.* But it is the property of a wicked man, to carry the fear of a slave towards Almighty God, because he wants that of a dutiful Son, a pious Servant. 1 Sam. 18 12.

Whether it were out of tenderness, or Shame, or Policy, once he was resolved not to ingage his own hand in so Barbarous an Act, as the murthering of him; he designs therefore to take him off by Stratagem, and to ruine him in the way of Generosity; he does advance him to be a Captain in his Army, but it is with Design to have him cut off by the sword of the Philistins; Then he gives him his Daughter in marriage, that his bed might become a snare to him; for his intent was, that *Davids* life should pay for her dowry. When these Designs and the attempts of *Assassinates* had, through Divine Providence, become improsperous: And when *Davids* incounters with the *Philistins*, had out of hazard brought him Honour, out of peril Triumph; Then *Saul* re- 1 Sam. 18. 13. with 25. 1 Sam. 18. 21. 25.

reſolves to act that part himſelf which was moſt proper for ſo ill a nature, the part of a Tyrant and a Butcher. And then he purſues him in his own Perſon, as a Partridg upon the mountains; and many ſetters were imployed and watchful to intrap him. But Divine Providence was ever ready to ſtep into his reſcue; for one while he is arreſted in his purſuit, by the Spirit of Propheſy, which came upon him; another while he is diverted by the incurſion of the *Philiſtins* into his Territories. And thus the All-wiſe God does order the attempts of malicious enemies to be ſubſervient to his own overruling Power, for the ſafety of the faithful; but this reſpite from Perſecution was of no long continuance. The *Philiſtins* are no ſooner retired, but like an unwearied Blood-hound *Saul* takes the ſcent afreſh, and follows this *innocent Lamb*, as if he had bin a beaſt of prey; nor can the deſolate wilderneſs ſecure him againſt his cauſeleſs Indignation. He does march up ſuch craggy rocks and mountains as threaten the ſubject-vallies with their prominency, and ſtrike terrour into the paſſengers with the danger of their falling; mountains that were almoſt in-

acceſſi-

accessible, affording no ordinary passage, but for wild Goats. His rage was so desperate, his malice so deadly, no danger could discourage, no difficulty could stop him. He does expose himself and his whole Army to a perilous expedition, that he might quench his insatiable thirst after the innocent blood of a most worthy Son and Subject. Now, *Vim vi repellere*, what more frequent? Doth not the very *Law of Nature* warrant the Practice, *To repell force with force?* If *David* had made a virtue of this necessity, and stretcht out his hand to take away the life of such a malicious *Aggressor*, in his own defence; surely the Argument of *Self-preservation* was pleadable in his justification; especially, if Providence falls in to second this necessity, as it did here; which brings a fresh supply to the force of the Temptation. *Ad init. cap.*

2. There was it seems, about *Engedi* a vast *Cave*, where the Shepherds were wont to secure their Flocks against the scorching Sun, and ravenous wild beasts; thither *David* was retired to shelter himself and that small party, which was his Guard. While the Kings Army was upon their March, Divine Providence, which over-rules Nature, and steers

the actions of Princes, directs *Saul* into this Cave, whether to take his reſt, or to relieve nature ſome other way is uncertain. Hereupon *David*'s Officers are animated to tell him, that now he had an opportunity to make that Cave the ſlaughter-houſe and tomb of his deadly Enemy. They tell him that to ſhake hands with ſuch a Providence is to take leave of it; not to embrace it were to ſlight it; not to follow it were to croſs it, and the ready way to provoke God to wink at his deſtruction, who had watched ſo long carefully for his ſafety. What the Prophet ſaid to *Ahab*, in the name of the Lord, after he had diſmiſſed *Benhadad* his deadly enemy, whom the Lord had delivered into his hands: *Because thou haſt let go out of thy hands a man whom I appointed to utter deſtruction; therefore thy life ſhall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* To this effect did thoſe Agitators of *David*'s Army argue, in reſpect of *Saul*. And to inforce the Argument and the Temptation,

1 King. 20.42.

3. They alledg an *Oracle*, which in their opinion had devoted *Saul* to deſtruction, as a *Sacrifice* to Divine Juſtice, and their own *Peace-offering*. For the men of *David* ſaid unto

to him, *Behold the day, of which the Lord ſaid to thee, Behold I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand, that thou mayſt do to him as it ſhall ſeem good unto thee.* Where and when, and by whom this Oracle was delivered is uncertain, whether by *Gad*, or by *Nathan*, or by *Samuel*; but ſuch an Oracle they pretend *David* had received, to ſupport and comfort him in his Perſecutions; and he had made report of it to his followers to encourage them to adhere firmly to him. And time and providence being the beſt interpreters of ſuch predictions, they took the confidence upon this occaſion, to plead that it might be put in practice. Otherwiſe not to act upon ſuch a warrant, would be an inexcuſable remiſneſs, if not a ſtupid cowardice and diſobedience. It would be a means to offend and provoke God, to neglect his own life and ſafety, and to wrong them his moſt faithful ſervants.

4. That they had adviſed *David* to kill *Saul* is evident, and without doubt they urged the execution with much importunity, as well for their own eaſe, as for their Maſters reſcue. They had been his conſtant Companions in his travels, in his exile, in his durance; many a hard march, many a hungry Verſ. 10.

meal had they endured under his Conduct, to attend and guard his perſon; many hazards had they run, and many dangers had they eſcaped; and now they carried their lives in their hands, while they were hotly purſued by an enraged Prince, and a puiſſant Army. Though *David*'s life was the main *quarry* that was hunted after, yet they were part of the *Covie*, and it was the common game to make them prey and booty aſwell as their Maſter. They could not but long to be reſcued out of this jeopardy; To return home and ſit quietly under their own vines, and enjoy their dear Relations: This was a very deſirable ſatisfaction; but not to be hoped for ſo long as *Saul* was ſo implacable. And their ſad experience had convinced them, his malice was ſo mortal it was not to be extinguiſhed but with his life. Nor did they deſire to preſs *David*'s tenderneſs or generoſity ſo far as to put the office of an executioner upon him: They deſired but his *Order*, nay his *leave* had been ſufficient warrant to them to attempt his reſcue with their own. And being thus redeemed out of his enemies hand, and out of his Juriſdiction too, this would have been a *Crowning Mercy* unto *David*, and have put it abſolutely into

his power to reward their honeſt and ſuffering Loyalty. Therefore if not out of love to himſelf, yet out of kindneſs and a grateful compliance with them, he was obliged to liſten to their counſel. For though careleſs of his own ſafety, yet to betray theirs was inhumanity; if his own life were not dear to him, yet (when he has the remedy in his own hands, and may ſo eaſily prevent it) to let them ſtill dwell in danger, was ſuch a piece of improvidence as was not pardonable in a Soldier and a General; being inhanſed by a double guilt. 1. of unkindneſs, and 2. ingratitude. And theſe united Grievances might amount to ſo high a provocation, as to beget a *mutiny* in his party, and induce them to conſult their own peace, and leave him to ſhift for himſelf.

5. And no doubt they did inforce the temptation further upon the account of his title to the Crown; and ſo twiſted his intereſt into the argument together with their own. *David* was the Lords *Anointed*, and declared *Heir-Apparent* to the Kingdom by a ſentence from Heaven. God (ſay they) has *intail'd* the Crown upon thee, and wilt thou be ſo tame as to ſuffer Gods declared enemy

to

to cut off that intail, by taking away thy life, before thou canst inherit? *Saul* knows very
Vers. 20. well upon whom the Crown is to descend; so that in seeking to destroy thee he fights against God, and attempts to cross the Decrees of Heaven, and to frustrate the Counsel of the most High. To fight against him therefore is to fight the Lords battel; to remove him is the way to accomplish Gods revealed will together with his secret Beneplaciture, and to establish thy self according to Gods Ordinance. *Saul* hath rendred himself unworthy of the Crown, and unfit to govern; he hath ruin'd himself and the whole Kingdom: barbarously slain the Priests and Servants of the Lord, and spared those enemies whom the Lord had expresly devoted to destruction. We have the Prophets declara-
1 Sam. 15. 12, 23, 27. tion, *That the Lord is departed from him*; *That he hath rejected him, and rent away his Kingdom and given it unto thy self.*

When he is divested of his Princely Power, and Regal Majesty, and the Crown setled upon thy head by an Act of Heaven; not to assert thine own right and title is more than an effeminate weakness, it can be no less than a supine stupidity. And has the holy Oyl been poured

poured upon thy head to so little purpose? If that Oyl has made thy person sacred, has it added no vigour, no activity to thy spirit? He that has given thee the Crown hath given thee the sword also to secure and guard it; and not to draw it in thy own defence is to receive it in vain. Give some proof of thy Princely Prowess and Magnanimity, and suffer not thy Title to be any longer subject to dispute or question. Lay hold upon the present opportunity, which a happy Providence hath put into thy hand; and let this day be the period of his reign, that it may be the commencement of thy own. These we may imagine were the Arguments which *Davids* Servants had mustered up to strengthen their temptation, when they did advance the proposition to assault his Loyalty.

And now behold the *Philosophical* moderation of *Davids* spirit. Behold a *Conflict*, a *Victory*, a *Crown* and *Triumph*. That Cave was the field, and the Combate was wonderful; *David* wrestles, and Anger played the Champion. *Saul* was the matter of the Combate, God the spectator and the judg. What a sharp Conflict was here betwixt Sense and Reason, Self-love & Loialty, kindness towards his suffering

ing

ing friends, and allegiance towards his dread Soveraign? But *David* was as firm and ſtedfaſt as a Rock in his reſolved integrity. Neither the memory of former ſufferings, nor the ſenſe of preſent ſtreights, nor the fear of future dangers, nor the ſolitude of King *Saul*, nor the imporunity of his own party, nor the hopes of impunity, nor the poſſeſſion of the Kingdom upon the death of *Saul*, could prevail with him to avenge himſelf, or ſhake his ſtedfaſt Loyalty.

This victory was more glorious than his triumph over the Giant, the proud *Philiſtine*; for there he ſubdued but a ſingle enemy, but here he conquered himſelf and his whole Army. *Saul*'s life was precious in *David*'s eyes, and he did abhor to kill him. Nor was this *Policy* in *David*, but *Conſcience*. That which was *Saul*'s fear, was his beſt ſecurity. He was afraid of *David*, *becauſe God was with him*. And why ſo? *God doth reſtrain the ſpirit of Princes: And he it was that bridled up the ſpirit of David.* As *Joſeph* in another caſe, *How ſhall I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* Such a wickedneſs *David* deemed it to take away *Saul*'s life; and therefore when he had him at another time at the

1 Sam. 16. 21.

1 Sam. 18. 12.

like

like advantage, he gave this charge to his Captain *Abiſhai*, *Deſtroy him not, for who can ſtretch forth his hand againſt the Lords Anointed, and be guiltleſs?* 1 Sam. 26. 9.

Obj. But this Prince was wilful, mercileſs, and a *Tyrant*. *Agitator.*

Sol. We are obliged to be dutiful, *Not only to the juſt and gentle, but alſo to the moroſe and froward.* And if I be under a violent perſecution, it is not lawful for me, *vim vi repellere*, to incounter force with force; but when the Aggreſſor is my equal or fellow-ſubject: And then it muſt be done, *cum inculpata tutela*, when I can make no eſcape by flight, and have no other way for my defence. But my Prince has his Authority over me from Heaven; and therefore I muſt be ſubject to him, out of *Conſcience, as for the Lords ſake.* The ſword is put into his hand by Almighty God; and for any private Perſon, or any *Club* of ſubjects, * to wreſt it out, is a double Uſurpation. They do invade Gods *Sovereignty*, who ſay, *Vengeance is mine* and the Princes *Perogative*, whoſe office it is to *protect* and *puniſh*; when we 1 Pet. 2. 17, 18.

* For the King is not anointed over ſingle Perſons, but over Gods Inheritance, 1 Sam. 10. 1. & Chap 15. 17. the head of the Tribes.

we will be our own Protectors, and defend our ſelves againſt the order of God and Man, we deſervedly forfeit the Protection of them both.

Obj. But that Power, which God had put into this Prince's hands to inable him to Protect, he did imploy to perſecute.

Sol. Why in that caſe, there is no neceſſity to reſiſt, becauſe then, God has made it our duty to ſuffer. *And it is better, if the will of God be ſo, to ſuffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.* God gives thee an opportunity to exerciſe thy Faith and Patience; thy ſelf-denyal and thy meekneſs; thy Equanimity and generous Reliance upon him. And when he calls thee to this ſuffering, he is well able to reward thee for it. *Bleſſed are they that are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake.* You are not left without a precedent; *For the joy that was ſet before him,* Chriſt himſelf was pleaſed, *to endure the Croſs and deſpiſe the ſhame.* And he left us an example that we ſhould *not avenge our ſelves, but follow his ſteps in* Obedience unto blood, *committing both our cauſe and our ſelves* to him, *who judgeth righteouſly.* And this was exactly

1 Pet. 3. 17.

Mat. 5. 10.
1 Pet. 3. 14.

Heb. 12. v. 2.

1 Pet. 2. 21, 23.

exactly *Davids* Practice. *The Lord judg between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but mine hand ſhall not be upon thee.* 1 Sam. 24. 12, 13. *As ſaith the Proverbs of the Antients,* Ab impiis egredietur impietas, (*which is, an argument,* quod impium eſt ſe ulciſci) *wickedneſs proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand ſhall not be upon thee.* This was his profeſſion unto *Saul*; and his complaint to Almighty God was to the ſame effect; *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe, but my heart ſtands in aw of thy word.* H. *Card.* Pſal. 119. v. 161.

Obj. But the Souldiers do here remind *David* of ſomething that had bin delivered by God himſelf in favour of their pretenſions. *Agitators.*

Sol. When Souldiers turn Preachers, every Act of Providence that ſeems to favour their deſigns, ſhall be the voice of God; every opportunity to do miſchief to ſuch as they oppoſe, ſhall be interpreted a command from Heaven to do it. And for ought appears in the ſacred Text, there was nothing elſe in their Allegation. Let us grant that the Lord had ſaid to *David* in expreſs Terms; *Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thy hand*: Yet he did not determin the

Perſon; he did not tell him, That enemy was his *Sovereign*: If he had ſaid expreſly; *Behold, I will deliver* Saul *into thy hand*; Yet, what to do, had bin a further queſtion? what? to kill him; no, *that thou maiſt do to him, as it ſhall ſeem good to thee.* And a loyal heart will Interpret this of an happy opportunity to ſhew a ſignal duty and kindneſs; not take it for a commiſſion to deſtroy him, againſt ſo many Pregnant Interdictions to the contrary. And this was the ſence and the ſentence of *David*, and he was a Prophet.

verſ. 4.

3. For the argument drawn from *Providence* it is not only irrational and unſafe but impious. When *Judas* committed a rape upon Divine Providence to gratifie his Avarice, he did highly aggravate his own guilt: ſo our Bleſſed Saviour argues the caſe before *Pilate*, *Thou couldſt have no Power at all againſt me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater ſin.* And ſure *David* had not taken Divine Providence by the right handle, if he had abuſed it unto *Parricide*; As long as he continued ſtedfaſt in his duty, he might rely upon it, that Provi-

John 19.11.

Providence was not weary to protect him, but awake to watchover him, and to put him into poſſeſſion of the Throne, whenever it ſhould legally become void for him. But we cannot offer a greater contumely to Almighty God, than to ſet his Providence at variance with his Commands, and make his Goodneſs contradict the Juſtice of his own Ordinance. If it be lawful to forſake the plain path of his Commands, to follow the maze of Providence; then the misfortunes of any Adverſary would be a good warrant to deſtroy him, and the rule of our practice ſhould not be, as the Apoſtle hath ſet it, *If thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink*: but thus, *If thy enemy hunger*, ſtarve him; *if he thirſt*, give him gall and vinegar, and *heap coales of fire upon his head*: Not to *melt* him into a reconciliation and kindneſs, but to *conſume* him into aſhes. And if this had bin warrantable, what had *Davids* own doom bin, when he was forced to flee from the face of *Abſalom*? when God had *put out his Glory, and caſt his Throne down to the ground*? Then the Inference had bin Irrefragable, *Perſecute him and take him, for there*

is

is none to deliver him. But this is ill *Logick* and worſe *Divinity.*

——————— *Careat ſucceſſibus opto,*
Quiſquis ab eventu facta notanda putet.

Let us reflect upon *Davids* imprecation againſt ſuch as follow Providence, that they may add affliction to affliction. *Let their Table be made a ſnare, and their wellfare a trap, pour out thine indignation upon them, and let their habitation be deſolate; why? for they perſecute him whom thou haſt ſmitten; and they talk to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded.*

Pſal. 69. 26.

4. 'Tis true *David* was anointed to ſucceed, but till he was duly put into poſſeſſion, he was but a *Subject*: And being *heir* Apparent to the Kingdom, it became him ſo much the leſs to be a *Traitor* to that Crown, to which he had ſo fair a *Title.*

5. And to be afflicted in the *Minority* of his exaltation, may be of Singular advantage to him. The *Rod* may diſcipline the *Scepter*, and he that has felt how *keen* the ſword is, may learn by that ſad experience, to manage it ſo much the better; when it is actually put into his hands by the Lord of *Hoſts*; he that has practiſed obedience in the

the *Paſſive* ſence, knows the better how to govern others. *The Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through ſufferings.* And herein *David* was to be his *Type*; and therefore he muſt not aſcend the throne upon ſteps made by the treaſonable ſlaughter of his Predeceſſor, but be led to it by the *Croſs*, and take Perſecution in the way to his *Coronation.* And his faithful Servants muſt be content to *ſuffer with him*, that they may be advanced and *glorified together.* And thus much of the Agitators plea, and of that Combination of Probabilities which did concur to attempt his loyalty, *viz. Provocation* and a ſeeming *Neceſſity*, *Prediction* and *Providence*, *Opportunity* and a juſt *Title* to the Crown, with the *Importunity* of almoſt forlorn Adherents.

Qu. We have the *Iſſue* of the Temptation in two particulars:

1. *In what David did.*
2. *In what he ſuffered.*

1. He did not ſlay *him*; he abhorr'd that practice, *Sauls* life was precious in his eyes. But to prevent a further miſchief of his inraged Souldiers, he aroſe up himſelf, *and cut*

off

off the Skirt of his military robe. And he had a threefold end in it.

1. To confute the *Calumnies* of his enemies, who had accuſed him for a *Traytor*; wherefore, ſaith he, doeſt thou give ear to the inſinuations *of thoſe men*, who would perſwade thee, *that David ſeeks thy life?* [Where by the way we may obſerve, that *David* does not impute it to *Saul's* inclination, (his duty taught him to believe the King of himſelf would do no wrong;) but to the malice of ſome Sycophants. *Behold, thine eyes ſee, that the Lord hath this day delivered thee into my hands, and I was adviſed to kill thee; but mine eye hath ſpared thee, for I ſaid, I will not put forth my hand againſt my Lord, for he is the Lords Anointed.*

2. And hereby he does vindicate his own *Innocency.* As it was a demonſtration of Chriſt's Power to make a reſcue, when the Souldiers which came to apprehend him, were ſtruck down backward at the dread of his preſence: So it was a Demonſtration of *Davids* Innocencie, that he *cut off but Sauls skirt*, when it was in his Power to cut off his life. *My Father, ſee the skirt of thy Robe*

in

in my hand. My taking this only, and not thy life from thee, is a clear evidence, That I have no Treaſon or Malice in my heart againſt thee. And *David* had

A Third end in it: To *convince Saul* of the error into which ſome *Sycophants* had miſled him, and to melt him into reconciliation and kindneſs: And ſo it happened; for *Saul* melted into tears, and an ingenuous acknowledgment of *Davids* tender loyalty: *And it came to paſs when David had made an end of ſpeaking theſe words unto Saul, that Saul ſaid, Is this thy voice, my ſon David? And Saul lift up his voice, and wept; and he ſaid to David, Thou art more righteous then I; for thou haſt rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou haſt* Verſ. 16. to 20. *ſhewed this day how thou haſt dealt well with me, for as much as when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedſt me not; for if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou haſt done unto me this day.* This was the firſt, What *David* did.

2. What he *ſuffered*; His heart *ſmote him.* There was a *palpitation* of the heart doubtleſs in him, through the commotion

of his blood and ſpirits, and the tumult of his paſſions. For hope and fear, anger and compaſſion, were in conflict, while he was upon ſuch a hazardous attempt. But this in the Text was not a *natural palpitation* of the heart, but a *check*, nay *a ſharp ſtroak* of Conſcience. For ſhew me *a guilty* Perſon, and I will preſently ſhew thee his *lictor*, his Tormentor: Shew me a *Traitor*, and I will ſhew thee a *Scaffold* where the *block* and *Axe* lyes for his *Execution*; that is, the *Conſcience* of the *malefactor*: Conſcience is the *Centinel* of the Soul, placed there to deſcry the enemy upon his approach, to give us the *Alarm* and notice of the danger; If the enemy hath ſtoln upon us, and entred our Quarters by ſurprize, it is his office then to check us, and rouſe us up to make reſiſtance and expel him. And upon this account, and to this effect did *Davids* heart ſmite him. For *David* found himſelf guilty, and the *Rabins* ſay, he was afterwards puniſhed by *Retaliation*, when his own garments would not ſerve to keep him warm. Yet others tell us he was *Innocent*, for what he did was to a *good end*, and out of an *honeſt and good intent*; only, ſay they, it

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is the part of good minds to ſtartle at the *Face* of the *Serpent*, at the appearance of evil, and to fear guilt where really there is none to be found. But, by the favour of theſe *Civil Advocates*, a *good end* cannot ſanctifie a *bad action*: If the fact be *undecent*, a good *meaning* can never give it a good Complexion. We muſt not make our Prince his weakneſs a *Foile* to ſet off our own integrity. When *Hanun* had cut off the garments of his Ambaſſadors, *David* could not but reſent the affront, and was ſo highly incenſed at it, he revenged it with a ſharp Hoſtility. And ſhall *David* offer ſuch an indignity to the King his Maſter? Kings are jealous of their Honours; and good ſubjects are modeſt upon that account, fearful many times to receive due praiſe, leſt it ſhould beget ſuſpition, and raiſe envy, by a miſconſtruction, as if it were a means to draw the eyes and hearts of ſubjects from their Prince to themſelves: for this reaſon *Joab* when he had beſieged *Rabbah* and brought it to ſo great diſtreſs, it could not hold out a ſtorm; he ſends to his Prince to come and take the honour of the Conqueſt: *Now therefore gather the* 1 Sam. 10.

2 Sam. 12.28. *reſt of the People together, and encamp againſt the City and take it, leſt I take the City, and it be called after my name.* It ſounded very harſh in *Saul*'s ears, he did not like the muſick at all, when the women ſung to 1 Sam. 18.6. their Tabrets, *Saul hath ſlain his thouſands, and David his ten thouſands.* For a ſubject to be eminently proſperous againſt his Princes enemies, is not always ſafe for him; but to attempt any thing againſt his Perſon that may leſſen his *Grandeur* or his *Prudence* in the eſteem or opinion of his People, is *injurious*; and if it be a matter of reproach to his *Royal Dignity*, it is more *heinous*, and amounts to *Treaſon.*

Vſe. 2. Doſt thou ſee thy Prince *cover his feet* (as it is ſaid here of *Saul*)? Doſt thou obſerve any thing *undecent* in his converſation? Thou mayeſt have a loyal heart, no deſign to deſtroy him; but draw not out the ſword of a *virulent* tongue, *to cut off his skirt* (to diminiſh his due eſteem and ſplendour), to *curtail* his *Robe* of *Defence* and *Dignity*; the *wealth*, and *ſtrength*, and *honour*, and *reputation* of a Prince; for his *Prudence*, *Juſtice*, *Valour*, and other *Virtues*, are as his *Military Robe*; They do clothe, defend, and

and adorn his *Majesty*. If any passion or temptation hath prevailed with thee to cut off any *Skirt* of this Robe, to eclipse o impair any of thy Princes *Interest*; Recollect thy self, and reflect upon the offence, and let thy heart *smite thee*; and as a fruit of thy true repentance, study to make amends for it. So did *David*, *confregit viros suos*; His Party were bent to murder *Saul*, but he broke their obstinate resolution, by his loyal exhortation, *The Lord forbid*, saith he, *that I should stretch forth my hand against Saul*; For though there be nothing in his *nature*, nothing in his *temper*, nothing in his *carriage* toward us, that may oblige me; yet there is a *civil obligation* lyes upon me, he is my *Master*; and a pious Reverence I owe him, for *he is the Lords anointed*. Ver. 6,7. When he could alledg nothing else, he doth fetch an argument from heaven to plead on his behalf; though *non propter sanctitatem*, yet, *propter sacramentum*: God hath put the *holy oile* upon him, and that renders his Person *Sacred* and inviolable. That *Graee* that has *dignified* him, doth restrain me; whatever the qualities of his natural Constitution are, His *Majesty* is *most excellent*;

and

and as he is Gods *Vicegerent*, I muſt have a *Religious veneration* for him. And wtih theſe arguments he breaks the ſtubbornneſs of his rough Soldiers, and charms them into calmneſs and ſubmiſſion.

And now tell me, Shall we take our *Creed* in this point of *Loyalty*, from the *Sword-man*, or from the *Prophet?* Shall we govern our Practice by the bloody Counſel of the *Soldiers* of *Fortune*, or by the Judgment and Practice of the *man after Gods own heart?*

What a vaſt diſtance, what a direct oppoſition there is betwixt the Principles of *David*, and thoſe of our late pretended *Godly Party*, the bloody *Tragedy* that was acted this Day upon our Gracious King of ever bleſſed memory, doth ſufficiently witneſs.

If Divine Providence allow'd them an opportunity for this their attempt of Parracide, it was deſigned for their trial, and as well to ſhame, as to diſcover their ſecret malice and hypocriſie. They had no *Provocation* but their own *Guilt*; no *neceſſity* but of their own making; no *Prediction* but a mercenary *Almanack*; and I am ſure, no *Title* to the Kingdom, but what was pleaded by the *Huſbandmen* in the Goſpel, *This is the heir, come let*

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us kill him, and ſeize upon his Inheritance. And this Argument, preſſed by their own Avarice and Ambition, with the *Clamours* of a malicious giddy multitude, prevailed.

What *Jacob* upon his death-bed, bequeathed to thoſe Brethren in iniquity, I ſhall apply to them, and ſo conclude; *Simeon and Levi* (for they went by couples, whether you count them by *Nation*, or by Faction, matters not) *are brethren, Inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitation. O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecrets; unto their Aſſembly, my honour, be not thou united: For in their anger they ſlew a man*; A man of *Gods right hand*; A man (as much as any) *after Gods own heart*; the beſt of men, and the beſt of Princes: *And in their ſelf-will they digged down a wall*; A Government that was a Bulwark to our lives, our liberties, our fortunes; to defend them from violence and invaſion: *Curſed be their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath for it was cruel.*

But God be bleſſed, who hath repaired that Wall, by reſtoring the Son of that *Royal Martyr* to reign over us.

And for ſuch of that *Combination* and *Brotherhood*, whoſe hearts are ſtill ſo reconciled

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to their bloody Practices, that they do not yet *ſmite them*; *Jacobs* Propheſie (which follows in the very next words) be their portion; *I will divide them in Jacob, and ſcatter them in Iſrael*; Let their *Factions* be *as the duſt before the wind*; and their deſigns as *the graſs upon the houſe-top*, that *withereth before it be pluck-ed up.*

But let thy hand, O Lord, be upon the man of thy right-hand, our *Gracious Sovereign*; *make him ſtrong for thine own ſelf*; *Clothe his enemies with ſhame, upon himſelf let his Crown flouriſh*: That under his Government we may lead *a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty.* So we thy People, and the ſheep of thy Paſture, will give thee thanks for ever, and ſhew forth thy Praiſe to all generations. *Amen.*

Numb. 17. 10.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aarons rod again before the Testimony, to be kept for a token against the Rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings, from me, that they die not.

When the flames of dissention do break out in the house of God, a Religious Prince can do nothing more noble, nothing more becoming his Royal Office, than to bring water to quench it. God having intrusted him with the Supream Power, is pleased also to deposite the Court-rolls of Heaven in his hands. He creates him, *Custos utriusq; Tabulæ*, *Defender of the Faith*, and a *Nursing Father* of the Church. *David* even for Gods sake was glad to be *a door-keeper in the house of God*, that he might shut out profanation, and debar intruders from invading the Sacred Office, and committing a Rape upon Deut. 17. 18.

Holy Things. Beſides, there is no Prince ſo ſtrong in his *Militia*, and the *affections* of his people, but he will ſtand in need of Gods aſſiſtance; and the Prieſts intereſt lies chiefly here. Though weak and defenceleſs in himſelf, yet he hath the conduct of a Spiritual *Militia*; *Preces & Lacrymæ*, Prayers and Tears are at his Devotion. And theſe can prevail with God, and bring relief, if diſtreſſed, unto *Cæſars* Legions. So that *Intereſt* alone is ſufficient to procure a reciprocal aid between them. The Prieſt is obliged to pay Homage to the Prince, to bleſs him in Gods name, to honour him before the people; and the Prince is reciprocally obliged to ſuccour and ſupport the Prieſt. *Aaron* was aſſigned to *Moſes* for a
Exod. 7. 1. *coadjutor*, to be his Prophet, his Spokeſman to God and to the people. And *Moſes* was en-
Exod. 4. 16. joyned to be to *Aaron* inſtead of God, a *Sun*, and a *Shield*, a *Defence and Comfort*.

Indeed Controverſies in Religion are ſeldom managed with that temper, that ſhould keep them within their proper ſphere. Men for the moſt part contending not ſo much for Truth as Victory: Debates commonly beget Animoſities, and thoſe Animoſities are fomented into Parties and Factions. So that a *Schiſm*

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can no ſooner ariſe in the Church, but it is preſently attended with *Sedition* in the State. When the Church is in jeopardy through the commotions of a tumultuating people, the fluctuation of thoſe raging waters does uſually make the State ſick, put the whole body Politick into a diſtemper. If *Aaron* be diſturbed in his Office, *Moſes* cannot long ſit quiet upon his Throne. Divine Providence doth thus order it, that the Prince may find himſelf concern'd, as well in kindneſs to himſelf, (for his own tranquillity) as in love to God, to becalm ſuch raging tempeſts, to bridle and reſtrain ſuch ſtubborn diſpoſitions. When the offices of Prince and Prieſt were united in one ſingle perſon (as they were in *Melchizedec*, and by the law of nature in the firſt-born;) the neceſſity hereof was more viſible, but not more important. When the adminiſtration of theſe Offices is committed to diſtinct perſons, their intereſt is ſo mixt and twiſted, that like Twins they thrive and fade, live and die together. Though the pretended quarrel be for *Liberty* in Matters of Religion, yet the Inſurrection hereupon is as well *againſt Moſes as a-* Numb. 16.
gainſt Aaron. Hereupon the *Crown* and the *Myter*, the *Scepter* and the *Croſier* are concern'd

in Prudence to ingage in an inviolable league, for the mutual defence of one another. Upon this account *Moſes* doth eſpouſe the quarrel of the Prieſthood, owns its Intereſt, and becomes its *Patron* under all perils. And this he does not fondly and raſhly, but in the fear of God, and upon good advice; yea by Gods own order and appointment. *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes*, &c.

Here we have a great controverſie about a *Title of office.* The office of the *Prieſthood*; In which there are three things conſiderable:

1. The *Caſe*, 2. The *Trial*, 3. The *Record.*

1. The *Caſe* is *Aaron's*; wherein we ſhall conſider, 1. The *Competitors*, (amongſt whom we ſhall find a *Plaintiff* and the Defendant). And 2. The *Patron.* In the 2. the *Trial*; we ſhall conſider, 1. the *Jury*, and 2. the *Verdict.* A *Jury* of Gods own Impannelling, ſo that we may be ſure it was upright and impartial. *Take twelve rods according to the number of the Tribes of Iſrael; And write the Prince of every Tribe his name upon his Rod. And lay them up in the Tabernacle of the Congregation before the Teſtimony, where I will*

will meet with you. And it ſhall come to paſs Verſ. 3, 4, 5.
that the mans Rod, whom I ſhall chuſe, ſhall bloſſome.

2. The *Verdict*, not given by way of *Oracle*; for they had no great confidence in *Moſes*, who was to report the Oracle. Therefore God ſpeaks to their eyes by way of *miracle*; and ſo the *Verdict* is according to Gods own direction. *And it came to paſs* Verſ. 8.
on the morrow, That Moſes went into the Tabernacle of witneſs, and behold the Rod of Aaron for the houſe of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed bloſſoms, and yielded almonds. In the third the *Record*, we ſhall conſider, 1. the *Exemplification* of it; and 2. the *Deſign*. And theſe are expreſly in my Text, *Refer virgam ut ſervetur in ſignum.* And the Lord ſaid unto *Moſes*, *Bring Aarons Rod again, before the Teſtimony, to be kept for a token againſt the Rebels.* This I call the *Exemplification* of the Record, *Et quieſcant querelæ*; And *thou ſhalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they dye not.* This is the *Deſign, and purpoſe of it.*

1. We will begin with the *Caſe*, *Aarons Caſe*, and firſt of the *Patron* of it, which was *Moſes: Dixitq; Dominus ad Moſem.* The

Hierarchy

Hierarchy of the Church was not of *Moſes's* Inſtitution. The God of *Order* eſtabliſhed an *imparity* amongſt the officers of the Church. *Aaron and his Sons* were advanced to the *Prieſthood*, and the *Levites* ſetled in a ſtate of *Subordination* to them, by Gods own appointment. *Thou ſhalt appoint Aaron and his ſons, and they ſhall wait on their Prieſts office.* They are immediately dedicated unto God to ſerve him in the higheſt ſphere of Miniſtration: *And thou ſhalt give the Levites unto Aaron*, and to what end? *Bring the Tribe of Levi neer, and preſent them before Aaron the Prieſt, that they may Miniſter unto him.* The Inveſtiture is from *Moſes*, but the Direction and Authority is from God himſelf.

Chap 6.10.

Verſ. 9.
Verſ. 10.

Moſes, we ſee, had good warrant for this; but the Peoples jealouſie ſuggeſted, that he had his own ends to ſerve under pretence of Gods Inſtitution. They ſuſpected he had a deſign to eſtabliſh his own Throne and an uſurped Prerogative; and they thought there was no way ſo likely to accompliſh this, as by advanceing his allies; his elder brother, *Aaron*, to the high-Prieſts Office. And if he could perſwade the People that this

this eſtabliſhment was by Gods own appointment, while the Glory of the *Myter* did put out their eyes and dazle their judgments, he might take his Advantage to make himſelf an abſolute Prince over them. That this was their ſenſe is evident from their diſcourſe, *Ye take too much upon you; will ye put out the eyes of this People? and wilt thou* [*Moſes*] *make thy ſelf altogether a Prince over us?* Verſ. 3,13,14. Hereupon as well to vindicate the Integrity of *Moſes*, as the Authority of his own Inſtitution, God appoints *Moſes* to be the *Patron* of *Aarons* Caſe, *Dixitque Dominus ad Moſen*; And *the Lord ſaid unto Moſes*, &c. 'Tis ſtrange an Office that lyes under ſo much contempt amongſt ſome, ſhould be a matter of ſo much emulation amongſt the Princes of *Iſrael*. Indeed it is a great Priviledg to have ſo free an acceſs to God, as the Prieſt ever had; and a great Dignity to be next *Moſes* (the Prince) as well in point of Honour as Authority. But if their eyes were dazled with the ſplendour of the *Myter*, Num.18.1. their heart ſhould have weighed what a burden it is *to bear the iniquity of the Sanctuary, and of the Prieſthood.* This haply might have taken off the envy, and we ſhould not

not have had ſo many *Rivals* to promote a Faction againſt the right *Incumbent* in the holy Office. Ambition ſtarted the diſpute, which was promoted by *Corah* out of envy, and the Sons of *Ruben* his confederates; and began upon this pretence. Before the Tribe of *Levi* was ſeparated to the Prieſts Office, the firſt-born of every Tribe was hallowed, as it were by right of *Primogeniture* to perform the duty. They took it ill to be diveſted of this Right (which the Law of nature had intailed upon them) and to ſee it tranſlated intirely upon *Aaron* and his Sons, created matter of envy and indignation (eſpecially in *Corah* and the Sons of *Ruben*). If one Prieſt muſt needs be ſetled over all the Tribes, why not the Son of *Ruben*, the firſt-born? For though his Father forfeited his birth-right, yet Gods Law doth not extend the penalty beyond the *third* or the *fourth* Generation; and by this time the intailed curſe being cut off, it is juſt his poſterity ſhould be reſtored to the right of Primogeniture. This was very plauſible for the *Rubenites* to plead, while they aimed likewiſe, in all probability, at the *Scepter*. But this would not ſerve *Corah's* turn, he affected

vid. *Bonfr.* in Chap 16.2.

Num.16.1.

Chap.3. Verſ.45.

Gen.49.3.
1.Chron.5.1.

affected an *Eccleſiaſtical ſupremacy* himſelf (ſo *Moſes* tells him:) But he could not tell well how to make out his Title, for though he was of the Tribe of *Levi*, yet he was head but of the *Second* houſe; *Aaron* was of the *firſt*. He was therefore to gratifie his envy by procuring *Aarons* Juriſdiction to be *voted* down, and his Power *levelled*, that himſelf might be exempted from all *Canonical Obedience*, and become an *Independent*. And then his Ambition ſuggeſted, That by his popularity and little Arts of inſinuation, he might gather a numerous congregation. And to this end he courts the People, and pleads the cauſe of a *Godly party*; *Ye take too much upon you, ſeeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them.* And therefore ſufficiently qualified to *chooſe* their own Prieſt, or *adminiſter* to *themſelves*. This Doctrine did ſo bewitch the People, that (even after the *Ringleaders* of the Faction, *Corah* and the Sons of *Ruben* were removed by a Signal and Stupendous vengeance) *all the congregation* (not one Tribe excepted) conſpired *againſt Moſes and againſt Aaron*, to carry on the deſign, until *fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred* of them were ſwept away

Chap 16.10.

Exod 6.21.

Chap 16.3.

Chap 16.42.

with a *new* plague, and the reſt ſilenced by a *Miraculous* deciſion of the controverſy. In the interim, how does *Aaron* the Defendant, behave himſelf in this quarrel? why, he ſhews himſelf (as becoms a *Type* of Chriſt) worthy that Office, which they maliciouſly contended to wreſt from him, when he ſees that *wrath is gon out and the plague begun*: He takes his *Cenſer* to make an *Atonement, and ſtanding between the dead and the living*, He expoſeth his own life as a ſacrifice for theſe his enemies; but for his cauſe he pleads not one word, but ſubmits himſelf and it, wholly to him that judgeth righteouſly: and ſo we proceed to,

Num. 16.48.

2. The *Triat.* But had not a *ſpecial Verdict* paſt againſt them already? Had they not acknowledged a *judgment*, upon the loſs of 15000 Souls, ſwept away by a threefold Vengeance, the *devouring earth*, the *conſuming fire*, and a *waſting plague*? But this is thought imputable to ſome raſhneſs of conduct in the buſineſs; or to *Moſes's* Intereſt and importunity with God. And ſo their Spirits being imbittered and their hearts hardened, thoſe judgments made no impreſſion upon them. In mercy therefore, God deals

deals with them in cool blood, and ſummons them to a *new Trial*; wherein he vindicates the Authority of his own Inſtitution, and *ſeals Aarons Pattent* for the ſacred Office with a *miracle*.

In this *Trial* we are to conſider, 1. The *Jury*, 2. The *Verdict*. In the *Jury* we may conſider, 1. The *nature*, 2. The *number*, 3. The *place* of their meeting.

1. They are *Rods*. Men many times do ſo far degenerate, becom ſo unreaſonable, that God appeals to ſenſeleſs creatures to take up the diſpute and decide the controverſie, that he has with them, *Hear O ye mountains the Lords controverſie.*

Beſides, the *Rod* is an Emblem of *Authority*, an Enſign of *Juriſdiction*. *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy power out of Sion.* And there is a threefold uſe of the *Rod*, conſonant to that Emblematical ſignification. For 1. *Support*; for 2. *Chaſtiſement*; and 3. *Menſuration*. And it belongs to the juſtice of Authority to *ſupport* the weak and innocent, to chaſtiſe the wicked and impenitent, and to *mete* out reward and puniſhment reſpectively unto all. The *Rods* therefore are not unfitly put upon the *Jury* to find for the Prieſts office. And

Pſal. 110. Heb. 11. Pſal. 89. 32. Apoc. 21. 15.

the *Rods* of *Almond-Trees* moſt oppoſite to this purpoſe; for this being the firſt of Trees that *awakes* out of the dead of Winter, and *ſhoots* up to *cloath* and *dreſs* it ſelf, to it belongs the right of *Primogeniture* amongſt the Trees; and therefore it is ſo much the fitter to determine upon what Tribe the *Sacred Prieſthood*, a ſpecial branch of the *right* of *Primogeniture*, is to be transferred.

2. For the *number* of theſe *Rods*, there is ſome difference amongſt Interpreters, becauſe the Tribe of *Joſeph* was divided into *two* Families, and had a *double* portion in the land of *Canaan*, and ſo upon that *civil* account, there were twelve Tribes beſides the Tribe of *Levi*; therefore ſome think there were twelve Rods beſides the Rod of *Levi*. But ſuch an inequality had been apt to breed another quarrel; and therefore it is more probable, there were but twelve Rods, according to the number of the Tribes in their Original; and that theſe Rods were all of the ſame ſtock, the ſame growth, the ſame gathering and preparation, that there might be no *diſparity* to beget new cavils touching the deciſion.

And becauſe the Tribe of *Levi* was divided into two Families, though *Corah* head of the

the *second* House, and *Aaron's* Competitor or Adversary at least, was extinguished, and his Sons (being preserved by special Providence) probably had yielded the pre-eminence to *Aaron*, (deeming it sufficient honour for them to be dignified with that lustre that would be reflected upon them from the Glory of the head of their *Elder* Family,) yet to take off all colour of dispute about the Succession, God gave express order, That *Aaron's*, and not *Levi's* name, should be written upon the *Rod* for the *Tribe* of *Levi*. Numb. 26. 11.

3. For the *place* where this *Jury* of Rods were put together, it was the Tabernacle of the Covenant before the *Testimony*, before the *Tables* of the *Law*, by the *Pot of Manna*; to signifie that the *Rod* is an excellent *Usher of obedience to the Law*; and if it prevails not to that effect, that then it is a ready instrument to drive us from the comfort of the *Pot of Manna*, the benefit of the *Sacrament*. Or it might be intended that the *sacredness* of the place should take away all suspition of *fraud*, and add Authority to the *miraculous obsignation* of *Aaron's* office. This being the *place* where God did vouchsafe to exhibit *his Gracious presence* to determine them upon *appeal*, Vers. 3. Psal. 94.

appeal, in all *doubtful* Caſes: the *Rods* were placed here, to ſignifie, that this being a kind of *Sacred Lottery*, the event was wholly at Gods diſpoſal; Θεόθεν παραγίνεσθαι τὴν ἱερωσύνης τὴν χάριν, *Greg. Nyſſ.* That *the grace of Prieſthood is not of men but of God. Ideo &* Aaron *Sacerdotem ipſe elegit; ut non humana cupiditas in eligendo ſacerdote præponderaret, ſed gratia Dei: non voluntaria oblatio, nec propria aſſumptio, ſed cæleſtis vocatio*, Ambroſ.

Ep. l. 10.
Ep. 82.

And now this *Emblematical Grand Jury*. will afford us an excellent Definition of a *Prieſt* or *Biſhop*; he is a perſon ſlipt off the common ſtock of Mankind by a ſpecial act of ſeparation, not rooted in the earth, not fed with the *crude* juices of nature, to ſoften and infeeble him, to make him pliant to the *bent* of evil inclinations; but mortified to the motions of the fleſh; dead to the Temptations of the World; that being impregnated with bleſſings ſupernatural, with grace and knowledg, he may bring forth abundant fruit for the ſervice of Gods Church. And the *Verdict* which went for *Aaron* repreſents him to be ſuch a perſon: For *behold, his Rod had budded buds, and brought forth leaves, and bloomed bloſſoms, and yielded Almonds.*

Verſ. 8.

Here

Here is a *production*, which nature never had a due conception of, at least never travel'd for it. A *dry Rod* swell'd into *turgent buds*, and buds dilated into lovely *blossoms*, and digested into wholsome *fruits*, and all *ex tempore*; a *threefold* miracle to render *Aaron's* election the more certain and unquestionable. *Buds* and *Flowers* and *Fruit*; here's provision for *posterity* by an orderly *succession*. And the order of their pullulation is an evidence that Gods Grace does not destroy *Nature*, or pervert the *common course* of it; but only *assist*, *quicken*, and *advance* her in her operations.

Austin calls this Rod, *Sacramentum Sacerdotale*; and *Is. Pelusiot*, ἱερωσύνης ὑποθεσιν, *The Type of the Priesthood*. And what doth it signifie, *Nisi quod nunquam Sacerdotalis marcescat gratia*, saith St. *Ambrose*. The Fathers observe further of this Tree, that the *outside*, the *rinde*, the *husk*, the *shell*, are *hard* and *astringent*, *sharp* and *bitter*; but the *inside*, the *fruit*, the *kernel*, are *sweet*, *nutritive*, and *refreshing*. This is a significant *Hyerogliphick* of the Priests duty. It instructs him to be *vigilant* and *active* in his office, *austere* and *mortified* in his life, *patient* and *hardy* to endure the

De Temp. Ser. 99. ep. l. 1. ep. 50.
Lib. 10. ep. 82.
Origen. Pelusiot.
Ambr. Austin.
Fructus nucis amaram quidem & asperam corticem habet, sub qua latet quod est esculentum, &c. Theod. & Hier. in Jer. 1.

the ſtorms of reproach and oppoſition, while he is *diſcharging* himſelf in a *ſalutary fruitfulneſs*. Let him be *cloathed* with the *leaves* and *bloſſoms* of a decent Converſation; but laden with the *fruits* of all good works; that the Church under the inſpection of ſuch Paſtors may be as a *Garden of Nuts*, and the *Spouſe* delight to deſcend into it with his train of Graces, and inconceivable conſolation.

In ſhort, all Prieſts have their Rods; but all Rods are not thus *florid*, thus *fruitful*. Such as are ſo, without all peradventure are of Gods election and eſtabliſhment, as was *Aaron*.

And now I hope ſuch as are of *Iſrael*, of what Tribe ſoever, will ſubmit to Gods *Arbitration*, and be reconciled to *Aaron*, and *kiſs* his Rod; pay a due regard, a dutiful veneration to that Office and Miniſtry, which God hath vouchſafed to dignify with a threefold miracle. To this end a publick *Record* is made of it, to be kept inviolable. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, bring Aarons Rod again before the teſtimony*, &c.

1. *Before the teſtimony*, That whenſoever they came to *conſult* God about any *emergent* difficulty, they might not preſume to ſeek his aſſiſtance to *degrade* the Prieſthood,

or

or *cut* off the line of ſucceſſion, which he had *eſtabliſhed* by ſuch wonderful *Prodigies*, and to which he had aſſigned *Sanctuary* in his *holy place*; for thither the Rod is brought, and brought thither it is.

2. *Ut ſervetur*, that it might be kept; ſuch as attempt to undermine Gods ſacred Conſtitutions by the rudeneſs of popular tumults, do but make them take the firmer roots, and ingage God the more to ſhew *ſigns* and *wonders* for their preſervation. *Aarons* Rod ſhall find *Sanctuary*, and be preſerved *in perpetuam rei memoriam*.

3. *Ut ſervetur in ſignum*, It ſhall be kept *for a ſign*. Mans memory is naturally treacherous; and nothing can ſpoil it ſooner than ingratitude and envy. Therefore God does here teach us *an Art of Memory*, by preſcribing *tokens* to cure us of our forgetfulneſs; ſuch *memorials* being *ſignificant* to the uſe of *edifying*: though but *Ceremonies*, God preſcribes them, and though they be but of *Mans* Inſtitution, he allows of them. Such *ſigns* do not *confer* Grace *ex opere operato*, not by any *real efficacy*; no nor yet by way of *impetration*, they cannot do it. They have no *Natural Power*, no *divine*

Hic et Chap. 16.38.

Joſ. 22.10.

Promiſe for it. But they are fair *Objects* to excite and refreſh the Memory. And he that will either *eſchew evil or do good*, muſt firſt remember that it is his duty, and in this ſence and to this effect, every *monument* of Gods Juſtice, every remanent *inſtance* of the Divine Mercy, may become *ſacramental* to us.

But had Almighty God left himſelf and his Servant *Aaron without witneſs* hitherto?
Numb. 26. 10. No, thoſe 250 men with *Corah* and ſome others, they became *a ſign*. And the *braſen Cenſers* of thoſe that offer'd incenſe, were made a *ſign* too; they were converted into
Chap. 16. 40. *plates* for a *covering* of the Altar to be a *Memorial* unto the children of *Iſrael*. They could not approach the Altar, but the *reflection* of thoſe *plates* was a cleer conviction of their late Miſcarriages. But when men will proceed in their ſin after judgment, they provoke God to erect more *ſigns* to upbraid their ſtubbornneſs and ingratitude; when they importune him contrary to his expreſs Revelations, they get nothing by it in the end, but the *brand* of a more *laſting* infamy: For

4. This Rod is kept *in ſignum Rebellium fili-*

filiorum Iſrael, for a token againſt the *Rebels*. God had paſt an *Act of oblivion* upon *Moſes's* Interceſſion, in favour of this People, *Dimiſi peccatum populi hujus, juxta verbum tuum.* But God forgets our ſins, *upon condition* we keep a *Record* and *repent* of them. If we do *repeat them*, we *revive* the memory of our *paſt* tranſgreſſions; and ſet up a light, by which thoſe dim characters of our guilt, over which the hand of charity had drawn a *curtain*, become legible. And yet even here the ineſtimable Goodneſs of God is remarkable; he does ſo mercifully chaſtize their pride, that the teſtimony of their contumacy ſhall be the means of their cure, a proviſion for their amendment, and an Antidote againſt the peril of *Recidivation*. This Rod is to be kept for a token, *Ut quieſcant querelæ, ne moriantur.* To take away their Murmurings from me, (*yea and againſt me* too, for they were not ſo much againſt *Aaron* as *againſt the Lord*); That they die not, and that was the Deſign in this Tranſaction. Numb. 14. 21.

Ut quieſcant querelæ, to ſilence and ſtill their *Murmurings*. Ambition is reſtleſs and knows no bounds. *Cogitet qui honorem*

affectat tempestatem se affectare. He that affecteth Honour does court a tempest, for,

Philo. *Quid est potestas culminis nisi tempestas mentis?*

Psal.106.16. Such as climb the *pinnacle* of Ambition are tossed with the greatest *tempests.* These *Israelites* began with *Envy*, proceeded to *Murmuring*, and at last grew insolent even to an *insurrection*; they make a forcible *entry* upon the sacred office, and commit a notorious *riot*, wherein many thousands perish. God having *installed Aaron* and his Sons in the Priests Office, added this *sanction* to the

Numb.3.10. establishment, *The stranger that cometh near shall be put to death.* Yet their Ambition was grown so great, and their Animosities so high; That God saw it time to take up the quarrel, else all the Tribes had died in it. The earth *swallowed* them up; and yet they *murmured*: The *Fire* consumed them; and yet they *murmured*; The *Plague* made havock of them, and yet they *murmured*. And this spirit of *perverseness* was so great a provocation to a noble and ingenuous nature; God could not but be *severe* in punishing

Numb.14.10. of it. They had rejected their *Guides*, and were ready to stone any charitable *Informer*. Nothing but a lasting *miracle* can *shame* and

silence

ſilence them; *Aarons* Rod *inſhrin'd* in the *ſanctuary*, muſt compoſe their ſpirits, and make peace betwixt God and them, betwixt them and themſelves. If it cannot *heal* their perverſities, it will ſo far charm them into temper, as to *bridle* and *reſtrain* their boldneſs. They will now ſuffer *Aaron quietly* to perform his Office; and his *Miniſtry* will be a means to keep off future judgments. And to this end, the Lord ſaid unto *Moſes*, *Bring Aarons Rod again, before the teſtimony to be kept*, &c.

What *Aaron* was amongſt the *Tribes* of *Iſrael*, the ſame, upon the matter, is the *Biſhop* in his *Province*, and *Corah* was the *figure* of ſuch as make *Rents* and *Schiſmes* in the Church of Chriſt; who are therefore ſaid to have periſhed *in the gainſaying of Corah*, as in their *Repreſentative*. And yet, Good God! What an *Inſurrection* hath been made amongſt us upon that account? *Aaron*, he was *voted* down and *depoſed*; and in fine you cannot forget what became of *Moſes*. But (to make haſte out of that wilderneſs, and from amongſt thoſe *fiery ſerpents* that ſtung ſo deadly) *Moſes* muſt be recalled to appeaſe our *tumults*, to ſtill our *murmurings* and

Application.

Jud. Ep. v. 11.

and ſettle us in Tranquillity. To this end *Dixit Dominus*, The Lord ſpake unto his Majeſty; not *Immediately* by a voice from Heaven, but by the voice of holy Scriptures and ancient Councils; by the voice of Reaſon and Experience, by the voice of fundamental Laws and Cuſtoms; by the voice of Orthodox Fathers and dutiful Sons; by the voice of *Royal blood*, and by the voice of our great diſorders and confuſions. Many *Cobwebs* were to be ſwept down from our Church-windows, and much rubbiſh to be ſwept out of our Church-doors; and much duſt to be bruſht off the garments of *inferiour* Prieſts and Levites; ſome things were amiſs in the houſe of God, and no ſuch *Rule* as *Aarons* Rod to *ſquare* out a *Reformation*. Theſe were the Lords *voice* crying unto *Moſes*, to the King, *refer virgam*, bring the Rod again, *&c.*

But had we not a *Rod* already? *A rod* with a *vengeance*, a Rod of *Corah's* own ſtock, of *Corah's* own *gathering*; *Floruit virga, germinavit ſuperbia, iniquitas ſurrexit in virga.* Ours was juſt of the ſame conſtitution. The *Radix*, the root of it was *iniquity*, and that branched out into oppreſſion and violence:

Ezek. 7. 10, 11.

A

A rod of *Iron* this was, that broke the *Royal Scepter*, and beat down the *Royal Branches*, and *daſht* the Church in pieces; *A ragged ſtaffe*, whoſe *fangs* were *ſteel'd* with Malice, and *died* with innocent blood. It knockt down *Moſes*, and thruſt out *Aaron*: away with ſuch a Rod, and God be thanked, this Rod of the wicked did *not reſt upon the lot of the Righteous*; though it was ſomewhat long in motion, *rowling up and down*, yet it did not, it could not *reſt*, it was acted by ſuch a *vertiginous ſpirit*. This *Rod* was at laſt thrown away, and *Moſes* reſtored. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, bring Aarons Rod again before the teſtimony.*

Not a Rod of *Aarons* own *growth* or *gathering*, but *a plant which the Heavenly Father hath planted*: For *no man taketh this Honour to himſelf, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.* Our Rod is that, which undoubtedly ſprung from the *root* of *Jeſſe*: *As my Father ſent me, ſo I ſend you.* Heb. 5. Joh. 20.

Out of that ground it *ſhooteth* up in the Church of God; and all *Antiquity* ſets forth the *Lineage* of it, in the *viſible ſucceſſion* of Biſhops, from the Apoſtles, in the ſeveral Churches of their plantation.

In Tabernaculum, Bring it into the Tabernacle.

nacle; there it hath the Approbation of Gods eye, the protection of his *Preſence*. From hence therefore it muſt take direction to miniſter in ſubordination to the Authority and Honour thereof; there it is inſtalled, *ut ſervetur in ſignum*; lodged there in ſafety; obliged therefore to ſerve the *Intereſt* of the Church, which is the Intereſt of God and of immortal Souls. In order hereunto it is ſet up *in ſignum*, for a ſign: Yes, and *in ſignum ad ſagittam* too, as a mark for the Arrow. It is the Prophets complaint, *Behold I and the children, which God hath given me, are for ſigns and wonders*. It was our Saviours own lot, he was ſet up, *in ſignum contradictionis*, a ſign liable to great contradiction; againſt him they ſhot out their *Arrows*, even *bitter words*. And, if ſo bold with *Aaron* himſelf, they will not forbear his *ſubſtitute*; if they forbear not the *chief Biſhop*, they will not ſpare his *ſhadow*. As long as *Aaron* is ſet up *for a ſign* in the Church, there will be found ſuch *Archers*; we have them in our Text, with their quiver full of bitter Arrows; nay their Arrows are *upon the ſtring, and upon the ſlight* too. As long as they continue to be, *filii Rebellionis*, while they

they retain their froward disposition, *non quiescunt querelæ*, we shall never be free from *Murmurings*.

But are there any of this *breed* left in our *Israel*? Has not the Gracious *Act of oblivion* quite extinguished this unquiet spirit? If it has, what meaneth then this *lowing* and this *bleating*, which we hear? Are there not a many *Murmurers* attempting to exasperate the people into a new insurrection, that they may once more wrest the Rod out of the hand of *Aaron*? And do these men look for a *sign* too? yes, they do, and they might see *a wonderful sign from heaven*, if they were not blinded with pride and prejudice, and an obstinate Spirit: *Ecce Dominus*, behold the Lord himself hath given us a sign; *Dedisti metuentibus*, thou hast given *a token for them that fear thee*. At the tears and prayers of the Church, God saved her with the wholsome defence of his own right-hand. For the change amongst us, by the Restauration of the King, was no other than *mutatio dextræ Altissimi*, wrought by the right-hand of the most-high. *A sign* from heaven this was, without all *peradventure*. Yet these men are not satisfied, they look for, and preach for,

1 Sam. 15.14.

Psal. 69.6,7.

and pray for, *another sign*, and what sign would they have? The *seven Angels* with the *seven plagues* and *vials* of Gods wrath? Would they have more fire come down from heaven? Alas! *They know not what spirit they are of.* He that came not to destroy mens Souls, but to save them; did not ordain *Aarons* Rod for such a sign. If that Rod did turn the *rock into water* (as some have imagined) yet, to be sure, it did not turn *the water into blood*: It may bring forth *contrition* and *refreshment*, but not *destruction*: It *bodes* better things to mankind, even to these *Refractory* and stubborn children: 'Tis *signum salutare ne moriantur*; A soveraign preservative, *That they die not.*

Apoc. 15.

Num. 20. 9.

That is the end for which the Rod is introduced and *deposited* in the sanctuary. This Power of Discipline, *Dedit nobis in ædificationem*, God hath given it for edification, saith the Apostle, and not for your destruction. And yet he hath taught us to distinguish betwixt *yours* and *you*. Something was to be destroyed in them, though not their Persons; yet their *Carnalities*, their *vices*, their *Schismes* and *Disorders*, These works of the flesh. The Rod is to be administred,

2 Cor. 10. 8.

2 Cor. 10. 8.

miniſtred, *in interitum carnis*, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, *That the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* Mortification is the way to life, and Reformation the door of ſafety, *He that converteth a ſinner from the errour of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from death.* This is the right Method; Gods Method in the Text, *et quieſcant querelæ*, &c. *Thou ſhalt quite take away their Murmurings*, &c.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

Jam. 5. ult.

We ſee then why the Rod is placed in the ſanctuary; not ſo much for *Aaron's* own advantage, that he may pride himſelf in the Power and Beauty of it, but for the *benefit* of others, even of ſuch as do moſt oppoſe it. The remoter end is, *ne moriantur*, that they die not; but in order to this, the immediate end is, *Ut quieſcant querelæ eorum*, to ſtill *their murmurings:* The cure muſt begin here, care muſt be taken in the firſt place, as much as is poſſible *to take away their complaints and murmurings*, and how ſhall that be effected?

Why, *Virga eſt mater diſciplinæ*, the Rod will open the eyes, if it be adminiſtred with a little *honey* applied to the top of it, when the *aſperity* is ſweetned with *mildneſs* and

1 Sam. 14. 27.

Pro. 29. 14. compaſſion, *The Rod and reproof giveth wiſdom.* If the *viper* be beaten with a rod, it takes away his venom, and he becomes an excellent *Antidote* againſt poiſon. If we cannot *heal* their perverſities, at leaſt we may ſtill their *murmurings*. And to this end the conſtitution of the Rod is very conſiderable.

Deut. 25. 2. It muſt be a *ſtreight* Rod, that the infliction may be equal to the fault, *eſt enim verus præſul virga recta, æqualiter juſtitiam exercens atq; ſemper vigilans.* H. P. ad Ez. 3. It muſt be a *ſolid* Rod to ſupport the weak, and a *ſmart* Rod to correct the wicked, and a *ſtiff* Rod to defend the Innocent. Or (to keep ſtill to the *Metaphor*) it ſhould have theſe properties; It ſhould be, 1. *ſolid*, 2. *vital*, 3. *florid*, and 4. *fruitful*.

Ezek. 19. 11. Chap. 2. 4, 6. Chap. 3. 8, 9. 1. A *ſolid* Rod, not *hollow*, *looſe* or *ſpungy*, like a *cane*: For it is concern'd many times to encounter with a *Rock*; the heart of *flint*, and the face of *braſs*; and therefore it had need be *ſolid* and *ſteel'd* with Reſolution, that it may not yield to the *applications*, nor receive the *impreſſions* of an importune and ſtubborn ſpirit.

2. It muſt be a *vital* Rod, (and they ſay *Aaron's*

Aaron's Rod did never *wither*, was never barren after it was depoſited in the *ſanctuary.*) And this life muſt appear in a *threefold germination*; it muſt bud, 1. a *vital eye*, 2. a *vital tongue*, 3. a *vital ſting*. 1. A *vital eye*, and ſo it muſt be, *virga vigilans*, like that of *Jeremy*, A *watching Rod*. 2. A *vital tongue*, and ſo it muſt be, *virga clamitans*, like that of *Micah*, a *preaching Rod*. 3. A *vital ſting*, and ſo it muſt be, *virga ſtimulans*, like that of St. *Paul*, *a goading and a quickning Rod*.

Jer. 1. 11.

Mic. 6. 9.

1 Cor. 4. ult.

1. It muſt be a *watching* Rod, *Vigilat autem virga, cuncta populi peccata conſiderans, ut percutiat et corripiat delinquentes*. I have made thee a *watchman*, ſaith the Lord to the Prophet, The very eſſence of the Biſhops Office conſiſteth in a *ſuperintendency*, his work is *to watch for Souls*.

Hieron. in Jer. 1. 11. Ezek. 33. 8. Heb. 13. 17. and 2 Tim. 4. 5.

2. A *preaching Rod*, if it be a genuine Rod of *Aaron*, it will ſpeak to every man, and to every ſin in its own Language. And St. *Chryſoſtom* tells us, that two things are requiſite for correction and reproof, παῤῥησία καὶ πραότης, *a diſcreet mildneſs* with *an ingenious liberty of ſpeech*. *Plus tamen erga corrigendos agat benevolentia quam ſeveritas; plus cohortatio*

tatio quam commotio, plus charitas quam poteſtas, ſaith *Leo*. Kindneſs is more prevalent towards the correction of Delinquents, than ſeverity; charity of more efficacy than an imperious Power. For ſome diſpoſitions (as St. *Auſtin* obſerves) are wrought upon, *magis docendo quam jubendo, magis monendo quam minando*; more by *Perſwaſion* than by *menaces*; ſuch diſpoſitions as are unrelenting at *the ſpirit of meekneſs*, to ſuch other applications are highly neceſſary; and upon this account, the Rod is

1 Cor. 4. 21.

3. *Virga ſtimulans*, a ſmart and goading Rod; and in this caſe, the great Apoſtle, out of very charity, reſolves to uſe ſharpneſs. The virtue of good-men is not *ſine cuſpide vel aculeo*, not without ſome ſting; and there are ſome tempers will require it.

2 Cor. 13. 2, 10.

Yet I would not have this Rod turned into a Serpent, unleſs it be with a deſign to ſwallow up the Rods of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, when they bewitch the People to withſtand *Moſes*. If any be ſo obſtinate that they will not be corrected by *Aaron*'s Rod; neither obedient to the voice, nor awed by the eye, nor quickned by the ſting of it; eſpecially if any be ſo inſolent as to wreſt the Rod out of

Exod. 7. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 8.

Aaron's

Aaron's hand; if he provokes *Aaron* to appeal to *Moſes*, and *Moſes*'s Rod be thrown out after him, and that becomes a Serpent to him, he may thank his own ſtubbornneſs for that Tranſubſtantiation; for inſtead of a gentle Rod he deſerves to be whipt with Scorpions. The Prophet *Jeremy* ſaw a *Rod*, *and a ſeething Pot* too; and it is the obſervation of *Origen*, *Si ergo tali virga* (Diſciplinæ) *non emendaris, in cacabum mitteris, & cacabus ſuccendetur.* If the Rod of Diſcipline cannot reform thee, thou ſhalt be caſt into the ſeething Pot to be conſumed. Jer. 1. 12, 13. in Pſal. 38. Homil. 2.

3. It muſt be a *florid* Rod; ſome leaves it ſhould have, not broad enough to lodg or ſhelter Serpents, but ſoveraign to heal, and then to hide the ſcar and blemiſh of the infirm and ſurprized Patient. But ſome ſores are ſo deep, foul, and offenſive, they muſt be drawn and laid open, in order to their cure; to furniſh leaves to cover ſuch, is to skin over an old ſore, till it rankles, till it become more noiſome and contagious.

But to make the Rod *florid* it muſt have *bloſſoms* as well as *leaves*. It is expected (whatever Habits are in faſhion amongſt others) that the Prieſts ſhould be *cloathed* with *righteouſneſs*

Pſal.132.16. *ouſneſs* and *ſalvation*; that they ſhould be endued with the flower of Learning, and the beauty of Holineſs. And why ſhould not this have the advantage of Wealth and Honour to adorn and dreſs it up, as well as other Rods? Though ſuch Secular acceſſions cannot make it the more Sacred, yet they may make it the more awful, which will make it alſo the more ſerviceable, both to the Church of God, and to *Moſes* his Vicegerent. And this would be a means to make it what it ſhould be.

4. A *fruitful* Rod; ſome perhaps do really mind nothing, but the leaves and bloſſoms to cloth and adorn them. So they may be kept warm and gay, they care for nothing elſe. But as *Leo* hath it, *Tua Conſcientia honorem ſibi debitum vindicant, qui pro animabus ſibi creditis non laborant? Beſtiæ irruunt, & ſepta ovium non claudunt. Fures inſidiantur, & excubias non prætendunt. Morbi crebreſcunt, & remedia nulla proſpiciunt. Feed thy flock with thy Rod*, ſaith the Lord to his Prophet. The flock muſt be fed, and to that effect the Rod muſt be fruitful.

Ep.93. Chap.16.

Mic.7.14.

There are bitter Almonds whoſe virtue is to allay the fumes, digeſt the crudities and dry

dry up the inundations of Intemperance, to open Obstructions, those of Covetousness and Oppression, to expel the wind, that *flatus* of pride and vanity, to purge the *reins* and the *inner* man of all inordinate lusts and passons, and very useful to smooth the skin of a Christians *outward conversation*, to make it beautiful and lovely. And there are sweet Almonds too, which afford an oyl and milk to close the wounds of a broken heart, to refresh the weak, to cool the *Calentures* of distempered Consciences, and bring them to repose and comfort.

When we have such *solid* and such *vital*, such *florid* and such *fruitful* Rods as these set before the flock. Methinks we should all be of *Jacobs* breed, our inward conceptions, and outward productions; our hearts and our works should be of the *same* complexion, by the *transforming* Power of a happy imitation.

To conclude, life consisteth in *motion*, and the *vigour* of life discovers it self in the *quickness* of that motion; and even by the constitution of his Rod, *Aaron* is instructed

to use *Expedition* in the Administration of his *Discipline*. For the *Almond-tree* hath its name from the *forwardness* of it's productions. When causes, which fall under the *Inspection* of this *Rod*, are kept too long before they come to a *Decision*, this is an *ill sign*; and provokes justly to *complaint* and *murmuring*. It argues the Rod to be *blind* or *dumb*; *soft* or *stupid*; without *sting* or *life*, not like the Rod that *shoots* up by Gods appointment; for that is followed with *a speedy sentence, and a due execution.*

Jer. 1. 11, 12.

Let the Rod be *Expeditious* in its *Process*, that there be no cause of *murmuring* upon that account, and then men will stand in *awe* of the *sting*, and *reverence* the *eye* and *obey* the *voice* of it. And not only so, but finding *shelter* and *protection* in the *leaves*, Beauty and Ornament in the *blossoms*, Food, Physick and refreshment in the *fruit*, they will delight to dwell under the shadow of it. When they see it Soveraign to *heal* and *sweeten* all our bitter waters of strife, they will really believe of this, what the *Jews* do but fable

fable of that other, That it deſcends from the *tree of life*; They will cry out *Servetur* endeavour to have it *flouriſh*, and pray that it may be *preſerved* and *proſper*, in the Church amongſt us, to the Worlds end, *Amen.*

FINIS.